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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE COMBINED SANITARY DISTRICTS

ANNUAL REPORT

On the Health of

SAWBRIDGEWORTH URBAN DISTRICT

For the Year 1956

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Report presented by:-

The Medical Officer of Health and Public Health Inspector,  
Sawbridgeworth Urban District.

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## SAWBRLIDGEWORTH URBAN DISTRICT

## Annual Report on the Health of the District for the Year 1956.

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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE COMBINED SANITARY DISTRICTS

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1956.

SAWBRIDGEWORTH URBAN DISTRICT

P R E F A C E.

To the Chairman and Councillors, Sawbridgeworth Urban District.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present herewith my Report on the Health of the District in 1956. The Report has been drawn up on the lines suggested by the Ministry of Health.

Cost of Printing the Report

Because of the high cost of printing the Annual Report each year, the appropriate Committee of the East Hertfordshire Combined Sanitary Districts decided by a majority vote that the Annual Report for 1956 should be produced separately, in stencilled form, for each separate District. Thus my Report for 1956 for East Herts is in seven parts.

So far as I can trace the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the East Hertfordshire Combined Districts has appeared in printed form ever since the Combined Districts were formed late last Century. Furthermore it has, with the exception of the year 1894, appeared as a Combined Districts Report. In 1894 Dr. George Turner, Medical Officer of Health, reported that the Ware Urban Sanitary Authority alone decided to have a separate Report. There is then a gap in my Records, but the next Report in my possession, for the year 1899, shows that Ware Urban District has thought better of its earlier decision and is reported along with the other six Districts.

Let's hope History will repeat itself, and that it will be possible to produce the M.O.H. Annual Report in Combined Form once more. I think that a comment made by Dr. George Turner in his Report for 1894 is applicable to the present day situation, and I make no apologies for reproducing his remarks:

"A common report possesses many advantages, since it prevents useless repetition, much of the advice given to any one Sanitary Authority being more or less applicable to all." "... . . . . . and as the conditions of life are very similar in all the Districts any deviation from the general average should attract attention and lead to enquiry."

### Vital Statistics

The population of the District has increased by 110 persons, chiefly migrants into the Area.

The Birth Rate shows a drop since the previous year, and the Death Rate a slight increase. On the other hand there were no deaths of infants under the age of 1 year.

### Notifiable Disease

1956 was a satisfactory year. Very few infectious diseases occurred and there was a drop in the number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Register.

### Environmental Hygiene

Your Health Inspector has been kept busy carrying out routine inspections of food premises, at which, generally speaking he has found a very high standard of cleanliness. An outstanding feature was the co-operation of the tradesmen in the implementation of the Food Hygiene Regulations.

Slum Clearance work has progressed and your Health Inspector has carried out a detailed survey which has enabled your Council in 1956 to proceed satisfactorily with two clearance areas, involving four houses.

In conclusion I wish to thank him, and your Council, for all the help I have received during the year.

J. H. WILDMAN.

Hoddesdon. June, 1957.

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

John H. WILDMAN, M.R.C.S., (Eng.), L.R.C.P., (Lond.), D.P.H.

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Deputy (Part-time) Medical Officer of Health

Peter de Bec TURTLE, V.R.D., M.A., B.M., B.Ch., D.P.H.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR (And Surveyor)

C. A. FORD. Certificate of the R.S.I. and S.I.E.J. Board,  
Certificate for Inspectors of Meat and other Foods,  
Smoke Inspector's Certificate.

Public Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
The Forebury,  
SAWBRIDGEWORTH, Herts. (Telephone : Sawbridgeworth 2161).

Clerical duties to the Public Health Department were carried out by  
Mr. N. J. BURTON, with typing assistance from Miss E. W. STANDING  
in the Clerk's Department.

COMMITTEE CONCERNED WITH PUBLIC HEALTH.

Public Health matters are dealt with by the Highways, Public Health, Allotments and Lighting Committee, comprised of all the Members of the Council.

The Chairman of the Committee for the session 1956/1957 was Councillor Mr. G. A. VOILER.

## SECTION A

### VITAL STATISTICS AND GENERAL STATISTICS 1956

( Table 1 )

(Figures for 1955 are shown in brackets)

#### POPULATION

Estimated Mid-Year Population of Sawbridgeworth: 4,140. (4,030)

Natural increase or decrease	...	-3
Migration in or out	...	+113
Total increase or decrease	...	+110

#### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in Acres ... 2,678.

Number of Inhabited Houses according to Rate Book 1,370. (1,330)

Number of houses per acre	...	0.51
Number of Persons per acre	...	1.5
Number of persons per house	...	3.0

Rateable Value of District ... £44,481.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate ... £180.

# VITAL STATISTICS AND GENERAL STATISTICS 1956

(Table 2)

(Figures for 1955 are shown in brackets)

## BIRTHS

Standardised Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population: 11.06 (14.70)

Area Comparability Factor for Births ... 1.04 ( 1.04)

### Number of Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Total:</u>	23	21	44
Legitimate :	22	21	43
Illegitimate :	1	0	1
<u>Number of Still Births</u>	2	1	3

## DEATHS

Standardised Death Rate per 1,000 population: 10.67 ( 8.85)

Area Comparability Factor for Deaths ... 0.94 ( 0.87)

### Number of Deaths

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>All Ages - Total</u>	23	24	47
<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 year</u>	0	0	0

Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 related Live Births: 0

## COMPARISON WITH RATES FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

BIRTH RATE	...	...	15.7	(15.0)
DEATH RATE	...	...	11.7	(11.7)
Infantile Mortality Rate...	...	...	23.8	(24.9)

## PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

### Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) notified during the Year:-

Whooping Cough	1	(December)
Acute Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	3	(Aug:Sept:October)
Measles	3	(May)
Acute Pneumonia	1	(February)
Infective Jaundice	2	(February:March)

No cases of Food Poisoning were notified.

Three cases of Poliomyelitis occurred. The first was a fairly severe attack in a man of 29 years. The second was in a child age 20 months, who died. This child had been ailing when brought into the District, and probably contracted the illness in the London area. The third case affected a 13 year old schoolboy. Routine precautions regarding contacts and possible spread of infection were taken immediately the cases were notified, and so far as is known no secondary cases arose from these incidents.

### Prevention of Illness - Poliomyelitis Innoculations

The Hertfordshire County Council carried out a series of innoculations against poliomyelitis during the year.

### Tuberculosis Notifications Etc. during the Year:-

The Year started with 26 names upon the Tuberculosis Register, as follows:-

Males: Pulmonary 8, Non-Pulmonary NIL.  
Females: Pulmonary 17, Non-Pulmonary 1.

One New Case was notified for the first time (Male:Pulmonary); One Female Pulmonary case died; One Male Pulmonary left the District, and One Male Pulmonary case was cured of his illness.

At the end of 1956 the following cases remained upon the Register:-

Males: Pulmonary 7, Non-Pulmonary NIL.      TOTAL 24 cases.  
Females: Pulmonary 16, Non-Pulmonary 1.

### Tuberculosis Prevention.

The County Council had not started B.C.G. innoculations at Sawbridgeworth in 1956.

# CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1956.

Line No.		M.	F.
	ALL CAUSES ... ..	23	24
1	Tuberculosis, respiratory ... ..	0	0
2	Tuberculosis, other ... ..	0	0
3	Syphilitic disease ... ..	0	0
4	Diphtheria ... ..	0	0
5	Whooping Cough ... ..	0	0
6	Meningococcal infections ... ..	0	0
7	Acute Poliomyelitis ... ..	0	0
8	Measles ... ..	0	0
9	Other infective and parasitic disease ... ..	0	0
10	Malignant neoplasm, stomach ... ..	0	0
11	" " lung, bronchus ... ..	1	1
12	" " breast ... ..	0	0
13	" " uterus ... ..	0	1
14	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ... ..	5	1
15	Leukæmia, aleukæmia ... ..	0	0
16	Diabetes ... ..	0	0
17	Vascular lesions of nervous system ... ..	4	2
18	Coronary disease, angina ... ..	5	3
19	Hypertension with heart disease ... ..	0	1
20	Other heart disease ... ..	2	4
21	Other circulatory disease ... ..	1	2
22	Influenza ... ..	0	0
23	Pneumonia ... ..	1	0
24	Bronchitis ... ..	0	3
25	Other diseases of respiratory system ... ..	0	0
26	Ulcer of Stomach and duodenum ... ..	1	1
27	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ... ..	0	0
28	Nephritis and nephrosis ... ..	0	0
29	Hyperplasia of prostate ... ..	1	0
30	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ... ..	0	0
31	Congenital malformations ... ..	0	0
32	Other defined and ill-defined diseases ... ..	0	4
33	Motor vehicle accidents ... ..	0	0
34	All other accidents ... ..	2	0
35	Suicide ... ..	0	1
36	Homicide and operations of war ... ..	0	0
(a)	Still Births ... ..	2	1
(b)	Deaths of infants under four weeks of age ... ..	0	0
(c)	" " " four weeks to one year of age ... ..	0	0

CAUSES OF DEATH - Comment.

Half the total number of deaths arose from diseases of the Heart and circulation (24 cases). This finding is similar in the rest of the Country. Much heart and circulatory disease is now thought to be PREVENTABLE. Overweight contributes to this trouble by causing the heart and circulation to work under difficulties.

Cancer was the cause of 9 more deaths, and there were only 4 deaths arising from Respiratory diseases.

There were no deaths of infants under the age of 1 year.

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## S E C T I O N    B

### GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR SAWERIDGEWORTH

#### LABORATORY SERVICE.

Laboratory facilities are provided by the Public Health Laboratory Service at Cambridge.

In emergency, certain (Medical) specimens can be examined at the Laboratory of the Herts and Essex General Hospital, Bishop's Stortford, Herts.

#### COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SERVICES.

The following County Council Services under the National Health Service Act, 1946, are available in the District. Full details can be obtained from the County Medical Officer, County Hall, Hertford.

#### Home Nursing, Midwifery, Health Visiting and Welfare Centres.

Number of Nurses:    2.                      Welfare Centre:    1.

#### Vaccinations, Diphtheria and Whooping Cough Immunisations.

Medical Officers at the Welfare Centre will vaccinate or immunise babies at the request of parents. Family Doctors will also provide this prophylaxis free of charge.

#### Home and Domestic Help.

Applications for this Service should be addressed to the Local Organiser at 25a Portland Road, Bishop's Stortford (Telephone: Bishop's Stortford 332).

A charge may be made for this Service, in accordance with the County Council's assessment scale.

#### Care and After-Care.

Applications for recuperative holidays, if recommended by the Medical Attendant should be made to the County Medical Officer.

Equipment can be issued on loan to patients being nursed at home. A Medical Loan Depot has been established at Bishop's Stortford.

A charge may be made for both the above Services.

### Ambulance Service.

There is an Ambulance Station at Bishop's Stortford (Telephone: Bishop's Stortford 1101). Except in emergency, an ambulance should be ordered by a medical practitioner.

### Day Nurseries.

There is no Day Nursery at Sawbridgeworth.

### Mental Health.

Arrangements for mental treatment on the recommendation of a Medical Practitioner are made by the Duly Authorised Officer, Mr. W. T. MEDHURST, Collett Road, Ware, Herts, (Telephone: Ware 541).

Help in respect of Mentally Defective persons can be obtained by application to the County Medical Officer.

An Occupation Centre for defective children has been established in Hertford.

### HOSPITAL SERVICES.

Sawbridgeworth is served chiefly by the Herts and Essex General Hospital (formerly Haymeads), and by the Bishop's Stortford and District Hospital.

These hospitals are managed by the Hertford Group Hospital Management Committee, within the North East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board.

### GENERAL PRACTITIONER MEDICAL SERVICES.

Two General Practitioners reside and practise in Sawbridgeworth: but the Town is also served by Practitioners in the Harlow (Essex) and Bishop's Stortford localities.

### DENTAL SERVICE.

Dental Practitioners are available in adjoining towns.

### OTHER SERVICES.

There is a Mortuary owned and managed by the Urban District Council.

Blood Transfusion Donor Sessions are held at the Memorial Hall.

There is a very active Old People's Welfare Service in Sawbridgeworth.

## SECTION C

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

#### WATER SUPPLY

The piped supply is provided by the Herts and Essex Water Company to 1,286 houses, six of which share three standpipes.

63 houses in the District, including new houses, were connected to the mains during the year, leaving four dwellings in Spelbrook which are supplied from privately-owned wells.

#### QUALITY

##### Bacteriological

Reports were received upon 40 samples of the town's water supply, and show that B.Coli. were absent from 100 ml. in each case.

##### Chemical

Five samples were submitted for analysis. The results showed opalescence and deposit, the turbidity was appreciable due to the presence of a trace of iron (Average 0.47 parts per million). The water was neutral in reaction, very hard in character though not excessively so and it contained no excess of salinity or mineral constituents in solution. In each sample the fluoride content was 0.6 parts per million.

These results were indicative of a pure and wholesome water suitable for public supply purposes.

#### DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Most of the District is served by main drainage. Sewage is disposed of at two sewage works. The effluent at the principal works is discharged into the River Stort after purification and in the case of the other (smaller) works it is disposed of by septic tank treatment followed by land irrigation.

Three out of five samples of effluent taken from the Central Sewage Works for analysis were satisfactory upon analysis. The remaining two were slightly high in suspended matter.

Difficulty was experienced during the year in obtaining and retaining adequate labour at the Sewage Works due to severe competition from industry.

## REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Household refuse is collected fortnightly and is disposed of by controlled tipping at Redricks Lane Tip. Special arrangements are made in connection with trade refuse.

## PARTICULARS OF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S WORK during the year 1956

### Summary of Visits

Public Health Acts	...	...	...	...	136
Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	178
Food and Drugs Act	...	...	...	...	98
Factories Act	...	...	...	...	44
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	192
Total					648
Number of Informal Notices served					14
" " Statutory Notices served					Nil

## HOUSING ACTS, 1936-1954

### New Housing

10 Council houses were completed and tenanted on the Bullfields Housing Estate, and 30 Privately Constructed Houses were built in the District.

The Council now controls 293 houses, 10 prefabricated bungalows and 11 sundry habitations.

### Old Housing

Two areas comprising four cottages were represented during the year and were declared Clearance Areas. No objection was raised in respect of two cottages and these buildings will be demolished by the owner.

The owner objected to the Clearance in respect of the other two cottages and the hearing of the Inquiry by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is awaited.

The Slum Clearance programme is well under way, and ten new dwellings to provide alternative accommodation are under construction.

## Ex-Aerodrome Site - Parsonage Estate

5 huts were demolished in 1956, and the Occupants re-housed. 6 huts were still occupied at the end of the year. It is hoped to complete the demolition of the remaining huts by 31st March, 1958.

## FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS

### Milk

Number of Retail Purveyors of Milk	...	...	...	2
Number of Dairies	...	...	...	1

### Supplementary Licences to use Special Designations

Pasteurised	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Sterilised	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Tuberculin Tested	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

The Dairy was inspected on twelve occasions during the year. Purveyors' delivery vehicles also receive frequent inspection.

### Ice Cream

No ice cream is manufactured in the district. There are 12 registered premises who sell wrapped ice cream, and regular inspections are carried out.

### Unsound Food

The following foods were found unfit for human consumption and were surrendered:-

Category	No. of Tins or Containers	Weight in lb.
Meat (Tinned)	7	22
Fruit and Vegetables	2	2
Total Weight ...		<u>24</u>

(1955 Total: 63 lbs.)

### Food Premises

Shops and other premises engaged in the sale and preparation of foodstuffs number 38. This number is made up as follows:-

Butchers	4.
Grocers and Provision Merchants	10.
Bakehouses	2.
Fish Shops	1.
Cafes, Public Houses &c.	7.
Institutional Kitchens,	
Schools and Industrial Canteens	9.
Greengrocers	5.

98 visits were made to these food premises during the year.  
One bakehouse was discontinued.

Various improvements were carried out at food premises, including new washing facilities, additional sanitary accommodation, improved storage arrangements and structural improvements.

An outstanding feature was the co-operation of the tradesmen in the implementation of the Food Hygiene Regulations.

#### PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

No charge is made in respect of private dwellings.

Routine Sewer treatments were carried out twice during the year, and the Council Tip and Sewage Works were similarly treated.

#### Rodent Control - Summary of work done

Total number of premises inspected	208
Number of premises infested	21
Number of premises treated by the Council	21
Total Number of visits and re-visits	278.

## S E C T I O N   D

### FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

The following is a summary of information already supplied in detail to the Ministry of Labour and National Service on Form 572 (Revised), in respect of the year 1956.

#### Part 1 of the Act.

#### 1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

##### Factories without Mechanical Power:

Number on Register	3
Inspections	6
Written Notices	0

##### Factories with Mechanical Power:

Number on Register	19
Inspections	24
Written Notices	0

##### Other Premises under the Act:

(Electric Stations, Institutions, Sites of Building Operations, Works of Engineering Construction, but excluding Outworker's Premises)

Number on Register	4
Inspections	14
Written Notices	0

#### 2. Cases in which Defects were Found:- NIL.

#### Part VIII of the Act.

OUTWORK.      (Sections 110 and 111).....NIL.